

**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
Office of the Secretary
Washington, DC 20350-1000**

**SECNAVINST 5060.25
N09BH
15 January 1993**

SECNAV INSTRUCTION 5060.25

**From: Secretary of the Navy
To: All Ships and Stations**

**Subj: BICENTENNIAL OF USS
CONSTITUTION**

1. Purpose. To designate the commemorative period for celebrating the Bicentennial of USS CONSTITUTION and assign coordination responsibilities.

2. Background. The frigate USS CONSTITUTION, one of the first warships of the Federal Navy, was launched on 21 October 1797 and sailed on her first voyage on 22 July 1798. Berthed in Boston, Massachusetts and known affectionately as "Old Ironsides," CONSTITUTION is the oldest commissioned warship afloat in the world. She has become a national treasure and an enduring testament to America's maritime heritage and the democratic principles espoused by the document for which she was named. It is appropriate that during the ship's 200th birthday Navy and Marine Corps personnel, the American public, and friends and allies overseas be afforded the maximum opportunity to become more acquainted with her rich and colorful history. The 200th anniversary of the establishment of the Department of the Navy on 30 April 1998 coincides with the USS CONSTITUTION Bicentennial commemoration period, providing another fitting occasion to focus attention on the significant role of the Navy and Marine Corps throughout the nation's history.

3. Action

a. The period from July 1997 to July 1998 is designated for commemoration of the Bicentennial of USS CONSTITUTION. All naval activities will observe the anniversary at appropriate occasions throughout the year. Educational programs emphasizing our maritime heritage and Navy and Marine Corps history are encouraged during the years leading up to the commemorative period. Recognition of the exploits of USS CONSTITUTION and achievement of naval personnel during the past 200 years will be noted in public speeches, statements, open house events, change of command ceremonies, establishment or

commissioning ceremonies, national holidays and other public events whenever feasible.

b. The Director, Naval Historical Center, Washington, DC is assigned responsibility for overall coordination of the USS CONSTITUTION Bicentennial commemoration.

**SEAN O'KEEFE
Secretary of the Navy**

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